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it is our shame that we, the mythical we, the community, have. This is Miss Addams's message.

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### FICTION.

In a good hour the greatest living dramatist of Germany has gone back to writing novels and set down for us a piece of Berlin life\*—not neat or nice or cheerful, but terribly real. As people are so he sets them down, and gives the reader not a single figure in rose-pink or sky-blue for edifying adoration. This is manifestly unkind to the born sentimentalists, but with such he keeps no terms. He declared war on sentiment as such in the old days of "*Es War*" and "*Die Ehre*," yet he is not the least in the world a materialist; he believes that the human soul can and does exist everywhere, in vaporings and in bemirings, even in the most unlikely and sordid folly. Therefore, this history of one wretched life, set down without fear or favor and without one word of comment, is not quite hopeless. Somehow poor, impotent, silly Lilly is at the last a little humaner, a little less befogged, one short step farther away from the state of cats and canary-birds, one tiny degree nearer the remote estate of saints and poets. Browning once said something flippant about the immortality of the soul "where a soul may be discerned." Well, Sudermann has discerned it, has encouraged us to hope for it, in a book that expresses at once his comprehension and his hope of humanity.

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Such a quaint *pastiche* is this "Felicità,"† with never a hint of the real place (though the author knows Italy) or of the real documents (though the author has written on the Middle Age before), but all pieced up out of his histories and compendiums, some of them charming enough, out of abstracts and second-rate essays and novels even. Mr. Christopher Hare, who had so little to say on "Dante, the Wayfarer," and said it with such cynical aplomb, "condensing" "The Book of the Courtier" and hashing up the life of its courtly author, does not understand that he has still to learn to write. He cannot, so far,

\* "The Song of Songs" ("*Das Hohe Lied*"). By Herman Sudermann. Translated by Thomas Seltzer. New York: B. W. Huebsch.

† "Felicità: A Romance of Old Siena." By Christopher Hare. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1909.

describe a vista or depict a character or tell a tale. And yet many will enjoy the very names upon the page. The thrifty publishers, we note, who inaugurated the series of "Little Novels of Famous Cities" with a tale about Perugia, have used here a page bordering for a book on Siena set with the griffin of Perugia. It is all rags and tags of a velvet gown, a kind of gilt gingerbread cock-horse.

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### LANGUAGE.

When the odium theologicum had spent its fury, and the last dissentient had been burnt at the stake with appropriate solemnities, the odium litterarium had remained to continue the sacred tradition. But this has now received what we fear may be a fatal blow from the serenity and benignity—if these can deal a blow; it does not seem as though they could—of Professor Lounsbury's charming essays on "English Spelling and Spelling Reform."\* The whole book containing them is interpenetrated with a sweetness and light which must be temperamental, which must be an effect of what the Swedenborgians call *natural good*, and which could not have been acquired by the most eager and earnest spiritual striving for righteousness. To any one so thoroughly persuaded of the common sense and common honesty of the simplified spelling, the author's smiling reasons, his pleasing ironies, in its favor are absolutely unanswerable, and we should think the wickedest opponent of it would be convinced, and would set about enrolling himself among the blest, with eyes fixt upon the fonetic goal, and feet pressing thru the quicksands of superstition to the stedfast shores of the promist land. The sentimentality, the arrogance, the ignorance which have joined to fasten the chains of an insane orthography upon us, and to incarcerate our hapless English parlance in a bedlam where the lunatics are in power and the doctors and keepers are in strait-jackets, are all disposed of with a laughing ease that the lunatics themselves ought to enjoy. Never before was so much learning joined to so much loving-kindness in the treatment of the ridiculous pretenders to sanity in these conditions. Professor Lounsbury cannot dispose of all their "arguments," but he disposes of

\* "English Spelling and Spelling Reform." By Thomas R. Lounsbury, LL.D., Emeritus Professor of English in Yale University. New York and London: Harper & Brothers.